

**Claims**

We claim:

1. A method for maintaining a Global Master Patient Index (GMPI), the  
5 method comprising:
  - receiving information specifying changes to a patient record;
  - performing a search through one or more databases for one or more matching records that match the patient record, in response to the received information; and
  - if one or more matching records are found, creating an unconfirmed link between  
10 the patient record and each matching record.
2. The method of claim 1,  
wherein the information specifying changes to a patient record is information specifying a new patient record;  
15 wherein said performing a search through one or more databases comprises performing a search for one or more records that match the new patient record.
3. The method of claim 1,  
wherein said performing the search through one or more databases for one or  
20 more matching records that match the patient record is based on real world primary key information.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
performing a search for a patient record in response to user input search criteria;  
25 displaying a list of records that match the search criteria, wherein the list includes a set of two or more records that have unconfirmed links between the records;  
receiving user input selecting one of the records from the set;  
receiving user input specifying confirmation information for the unconfirmed links.

5. The method of claim 4,  
wherein in response to the confirmation information for an unconfirmed link the  
link is either: 1) confirmed or 2) denigrated.

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6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:  
receiving user input changing a confirmed link to a certified link.